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ABSTRACT

This guide encourages people to create safe walking and biking routes to school, promoting four issues: physically active travel, safe and walkable routes to school, crime prevention, and health environments. The chapters include: "KidsWalk-to-School: A Guide to Promote Walking to School" (Is there a solution? Why is walking to school important? Is it just for children? What can be done?); "Meet Max" (a typical elementary schooler); "Checklist: Organize a KidsWalk-to-School Program in Your Neighborhood"; "Step by Step: How to Organize a KidsWalk-to-School Program in Your Neighborhood" (identify interest, organize, assess, plan, implement, evaluate, and consider the future); "Program Variations: Making KidsWalk-to-School Fit in Your Community" (biking/skating program, walking buddies, bus stop pickup, and crime and violence); "Having Fun: Ideas to Generate Children's Enthusiasm" (traffic cops, environmental inspectors, and theme days); "Working With the Media" (what makes news and giving interviews); "Working with Elected Officials"; "Promoting the KidsWalk-to-School Program Through Policies"; "Funding for KidsWalk-to-School Programs"; "Safety Tips" (walking, bicycling, school bus, and stranger danger safety); "Resources"; and "KidsWalk-to-School Tools" (introduction letter, surveys, parent consent forms, press release, and participant evaluation). (SM)

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Kidswalk-to-School

A Guide to Promote Walking to School

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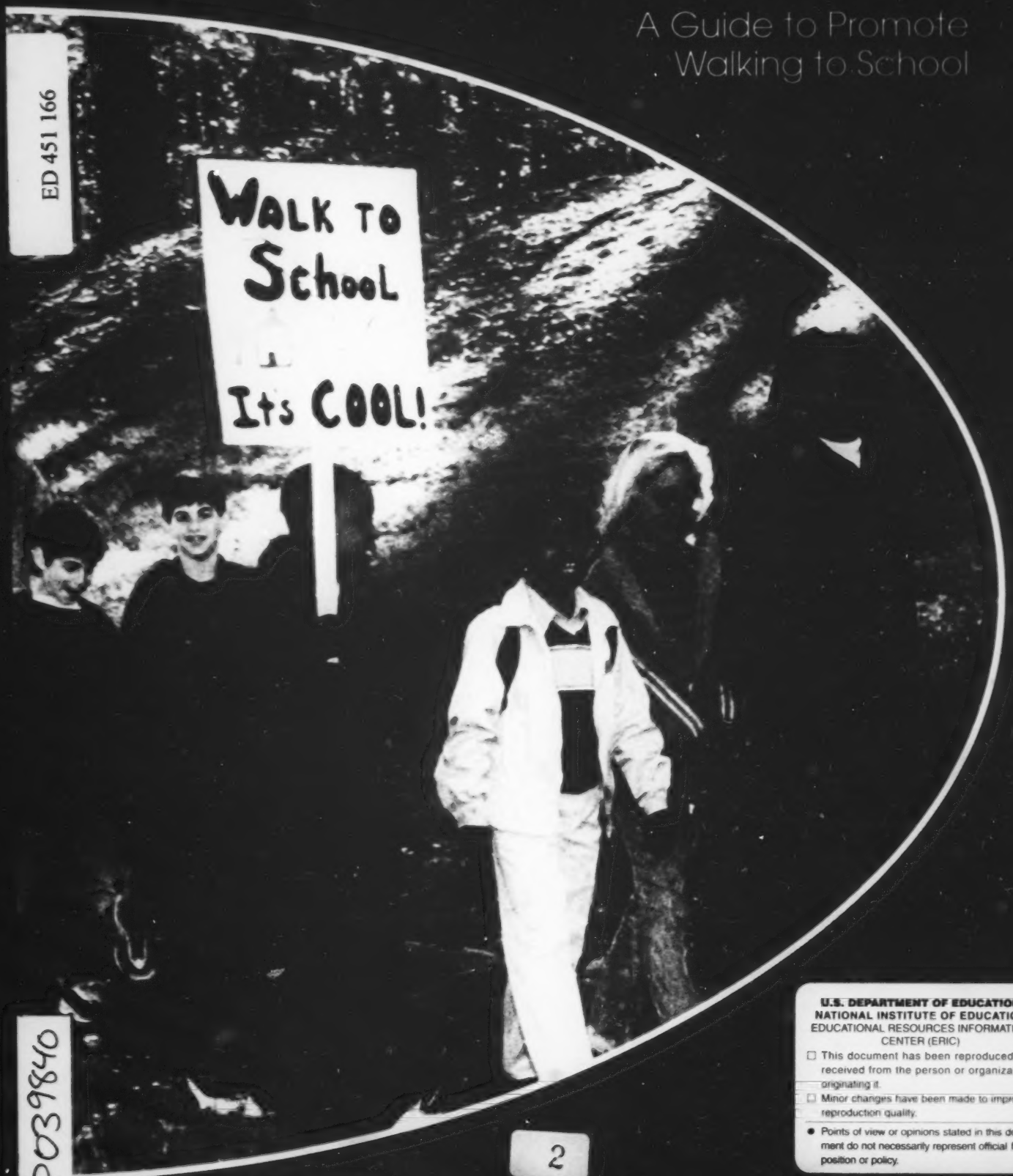

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KIDSWALK-TO-SCHOOL

A Guide to Promote Walking to School

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity

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KIDSWALK-TO-SCHOOL
A Guide to Promote Walking to School

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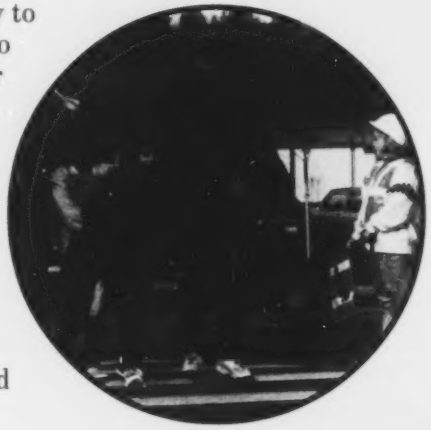
KIDSWALK-TO-SCHOOL:
A Guide to Promote Walking to School

Remember when children walked and rode bicycles everywhere—to school, their friends' houses, the park, or the store—and parents seldom feared for their safety?



Being active and exploring their surroundings comes naturally to children. Unfortunately, young people today are not as free to walk and play outdoors because our neighborhoods are no longer kid-friendly. Many of our communities have been designed to be convenient for cars, not for children.

Children's freedom to explore their communities is greatly limited when walking is not safe or enjoyable. Today, only 13% of all trips to school are made by walking and bicycling. Of school trips one mile or less, a low 31% are made by walking; within two miles of school, 2% are made by bicycling. Sadly, this deprives our neighborhoods of the activity and laughter of children walking and bicycling to and from school together.

Is There a Solution?

Yes! KidsWalk-to-School is a program that aims to get children to walk and bicycle to and from school in groups accompanied by adults. This gives kids a chance to be more physically active, to practice safe pedestrian skills, and to learn more about their environment. At the same time, KidsWalk-to-School encourages people to change their neighborhoods for the better, working together, to make walking a safe and enjoyable part of everyone's lives.

Who Should Use KidsWalk-to-School?

KidsWalk-to-School is for anyone who wants to make traveling to and from school a safe, active, and enjoyable part of children's lives again. The program is great for neighborhoods that have an elementary school within walking distance—usually within a mile. But the KidsWalk-to-School program can also be adapted for children of all ages, those who live in neighborhoods further from the school and those in neighborhoods without safe routes to school.

Why Is It Important for Children to Walk to School?

Kids today don't have as many opportunities to be physically active as they once did. Most schools do not have physical education classes every day, and many elementary schools are removing recess from the daily schedule. At home, today's children have a wider variety of television programs and video games to entertain them. These realities are keeping kids from getting regular physical activity and may be contributing to a growing number of overweight children, which has increased by 63% over the past 30 years.

Here are some potential benefits to children who are physically active:

- Makes them more alert and helps them do better in school.
- Improves their self-image and independence.
- Contributes to a healthy social and emotional development.
- Increases likelihood that children will grow into adults who lead more active lifestyles, improving their chances for better health.

Is KidsWalk-to-School Just for Children?

No, participating in KidsWalk-to-School is good for the whole neighborhood, not just for children. Here are some of the benefits:

- Children and adults in the neighborhood get more physical activity.
- Fewer people driving means less traffic in and around homes and schools, therefore . . .
  - People walking in the community are safer, and
  - Exhaust from the cars is reduced.
- Crimes are less likely to happen when more people are outside keeping an eye on their neighborhood.
- Neighbors have more chances to get to know each other and become friends.

What Can You Do?

Get together with neighbors to bring back the days when children traveled safely through neighborhoods. Use the *KidsWalk-to-School* guide to help you develop a walk-to-school program that is right for your neighborhood. Get into action and walk with a child on the path to better health for you, your children, and your community!

MEET MAX

Second-grader Maxwell Fenton wakes up and gets ready for school with extra energy today. He got up 10 minutes early because he's excited he's walking to school today instead of taking the bus. Max is eager to head out the door with his father. They will pick up his best friend Jackie, her mom, and other neighborhood kids along the way.

Two adults walk to school with Max and his seven friends. The adults regularly remind the children to stay on the sidewalk and to watch for traffic from driveways. At busy Front Street, the parents line the children up in pairs, wait for drivers to signal, and cross carefully in a group. After a comfortable 18-minute walk, Max and his friends arrive at school energized, alert, and looking forward to the day. In their brisk stride home, the parents accumulate 30 minutes of physical activity, the Surgeon General's recommended daily dose.

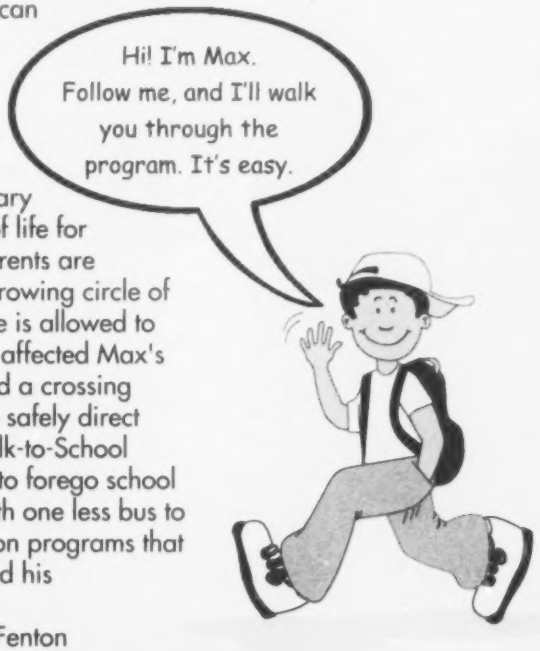
At the end of the school day, Max's dad and Jackie's mom walk home with the children. The same adults walk with the group on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; other adults join the children on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Because of these walks, Max is less likely to be overweight or have other health problems linked to inactivity. He learns about his community and how to get around it safely on foot. His community has less traffic, especially around the school, which means there's less pollution and less chance of being hit by a car. Max's parents have become aware of some things in their neighborhood that need improvement and they can bring up these issues at the next town meeting. In addition, crime has gone down in the neighborhood because of the increased presence of adults each day.

* * * * * *

By the time he is a 5th grader—the last year of elementary school—getting around on foot or by bicycle is a way of life for Max. He's active, healthy, and physically fit, and his parents are comfortable with his skills and awareness. Max has a growing circle of friends' homes and neighborhood destinations where he is allowed to walk on his own. The KidsWalk-to-School program has affected Max's neighborhood—the sidewalks have been resurfaced and a crossing guard now works at the busy Front Street intersection to safely direct pedestrian traffic. Because of the success of the KidsWalk-to-School program, during a recent budget debate parents voted to forego school bus service in their neighborhood. The money saved with one less bus to maintain and run helps pay for school physical education programs that otherwise would have been cut. So Max, his friends, and his community win all the way around.

—Mark Fenton



CHECKLIST: ✔
Organize a KidsWalk-to-School Program in Your Neighborhood

This checklist will help you follow the general guidelines for creating a KidsWalk-to-School program that is ideal for your neighborhood. The steps are explained in detail on pp. 7–19. Photocopy the checklist and send it to other community members who are helping with your program.

Step One: Identify Interest

- Informally talk with neighbors to identify who would like to participate in the program.
- Talk with school officials about the KidsWalk-to-School program.
  a. Find out if the school already has similar programs.
  b. Ask what rules the school has for transporting the children to and from school.
- Send a letter about the program to neighborhood residents (see Tool A, p. 53).
- Contact other potential partners.
  a. Contact the local health department.
  b. Contact the police department.
  c. Contact the transportation department.

Step Two: Organize

- Notify neighbors about the informal neighborhood KidsWalk-to-School meeting.
- Hold an informal neighborhood meeting.
  a. Recruit volunteers.
  b. Identify needed resources and begin to secure them.
  c. Pick a time, date, and place for the planning meeting (detailed in Step Five).

Step Three: Assess

- Provide a walk-to-school survey to parents (see Tool B, p. 54).
- Obtain a map of the neighborhood and school area.
- Take a walk around the neighborhood and the school to assess safety and walkability (see Tool C, p. 57).
- Examine the results from the Walkable Routes to School survey and the Walk-to-School survey.
  a. Use the results of the walkability survey to identify areas on the map that are particularly safe or dangerous.
  b. Map the locations of families in the neighborhood who are willing to participate.
  c. Identify potential routes to school.
  d. Calculate the number of children who use each mode of transportation.
  e. Record the names, telephone numbers, addresses, and ages of children whose families are interested in participating.
  f. Contact the parents who responded that they wanted to contribute to the program.

Step Four: Plan

Hold a KidsWalk-to-School program planning meeting.

a. Present a summary of results from the neighborhood survey.
b. Define objectives or goals for your KidsWalk-to-School program.
c. Set priorities and deadlines for the action plan to make your neighborhood more walkable.
d. Assign tasks.
e. Make a timeline.
f. Develop an organizational chart that includes tasks, deadlines, and persons responsible. Send the chart to all participants.

Decide what safety precautions must be taken.

Organize adult leaders' schedules.

Send out parental consent forms (see Tool D, p. 59).

Conduct a practice walk to school.

Step Five: Implement

Sponsor a KidsWalk-to-School kickoff event.

Contact the media and/or local celebrities to be present at the kickoff (see Tool E, p. 60, and Working with the Media, p. 29).

Step Six: Evaluate

Reevaluate the program each term.

a. Informally ask all participants what they like about the program and what they think can be improved.
b. Fill out the KidsWalk-to-School Evaluation Form (see Tool F, p. 61).

Keep an eye on the progress of your program.

a. Monitor and address participants' concerns.
b. Keep the school informed about participation, problems, and improvements to KidsWalk-to-School.

Step Seven: Look to the Future

Keep your program going.

a. Plan for the next school term's program.
b. Restart the program every term.

Look for ways to expand the KidsWalk-to-School program.

a. Promote the success of the KidsWalk-to-School program to other neighborhoods, the school, and the community.
b. Conduct an informal schoolwide travel-to-school survey.
c. Help people in other neighborhoods start their own KidsWalk-to-School program.

Plan the program on a larger scale.

Take steps to secure a walkable community far into the future.

STEP BY STEP:
How to Organize a KidsWalk-to-School Program in Your Neighborhood

Use this step-by-step list to organize your walk-to-school program; be creative and design the program to fit the particular needs of your neighborhood. Each step should take about a week to complete but will vary from neighborhood to neighborhood; therefore, community organizers should allow about 7 to 9 weeks to plan their KidsWalk-to-School program. For additional ideas about making the KidsWalk-to-School program fit your community, see Program Variations on pp. 21–23 and Having Fun on pp. 25–27.

Step One: Identify Interest

1. Informally talk with neighbors to identify who wants to participate in the program.

Talk with neighbors about the program, share the KidsWalk-to-School Introduction (pp. 1, 2) with them, and see if they are interested in getting a KidsWalk-to-School program started in your neighborhood. Explain the general concept of a walk-to-school program and what is needed to get one started. Discuss the benefits of a walk-to-school program.

- Increased levels of physical activity
- Increased safety in the neighborhood
- Decreased traffic speed
- Fewer cars
- Community cohesiveness

Palm Bay Elementary School, Palm Bay, Florida.

It may also be useful to mention similar programs that have been successful. (Examples of successes are highlighted in boxes throughout the guide.)

2. Talk with school officials about the KidsWalk-to-School program.

If there is neighborhood interest in the program, contact the school principal to let him or her know about the program and the interest in your neighborhood. Ask who you can speak to at the school for answers to some of your questions and for help planning your program.

a. Find out if the school has similar programs. If so, contact people in the other programs and find out what they are doing and how they implemented the program in their neighborhoods.

b. Ask what rules the school has for transporting children to and from school.
   - Some schools may require informed consent forms from parents or guardians stating that the school is not responsible for the children until they are on school grounds.
   - Some schools may require children to have signed permission slips before they leave the school with anyone other than their parent or legal guardian.

Some schools receive funding based on the number of children who ride the bus and therefore may be concerned about supporting a program that may reduce this funding. Take this into consideration and be sure to remind them how children benefit from the program.

3. Contact other potential partnering organizations.

Developing and implementing the KidsWalk-to-School program can be done with a few interested and dedicated individuals, but a complete neighborhood effort will include established community organizations. Examples of partnering organizations are the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), local health departments, safe-kids coalitions, community traffic safety programs, churches, civic clubs, and local businesses.

> Walk-to-school organizer Bev Benda-Moe in Grand Forks, North Dakota, says that efforts made for the walk-to-school program at Ben Franklin Elementary School are seen as small steps toward large change. The partnerships alone that they have formed have set the stage for larger change at the community level. These partnerships will be instrumental when the community is ready to take on the larger task of making the entire community more walkable.

Gaining support from community organizations will establish credibility for your walk-to-school program and can be essential for overcoming the barriers that may develop during this process.

- Schedule a meeting with or write a letter to potential partnering organizations that may have a particular interest in the program and may want to become involved in assessing, planning, implementing, evaluating, or expanding the program. (See Table 1, p. 9.)
- Explain the problems you want to address and the program itself.
- Ask for support as you assess your neighborhood for safety and walkability and plan to implement the KidsWalk-to-School program.

Step Two: Organize

1. Notify neighborhood residents about the informal neighborhood meeting.

At this point, you have already talked to the school and to neighbors who would like to see something done. Now it is time to prepare for a meeting to provide information to interested persons and to organize the program planning.

- Send a letter to everyone in your neighborhood explaining KidsWalk-to-School and announcing the informational meeting; a sample letter is provided in Tool A on p. 53. Include people who do not have children because the program will affect the entire neighborhood.
- Post fliers throughout the neighborhood announcing the meeting. Get children involved by allowing them to design and distribute the fliers. Make sure you consult neighborhood rules on posting fliers within the community.
- Ask people in person or by telephone to attend the meeting.

Table 1. Potential Partnering Organizations

Partnering organizations	Ways they can help
School, PTA, teachers, administrators	• Provide a meeting place (classroom) • Provide resources (copy machine and fax machine) • May assist with school publicity • May provide motivation
Local health departments	• May be a good source of information and support • May adopt the project or help you develop your program
Police department	• Identify areas of loitering, high crime, trouble traffic spots, etc. • Present a seminar on traffic and pedestrian safety • Provide traffic and pedestrian booklets for parents and children • Help develop a crime watch program in your area • Help control traffic • Set up crossing guards during the commute to and from school • Enforce traffic laws in your community
Local transportation department, traffic engineering division, department of public works	• Resource for transportation statistics • Responsible for improving the safety features and walking/bicycling routes (such as sidewalks) to and from schools • Provide funding
Local & state politicians	• Provide support • Develop supportive policies or legislation

Atlanta, Georgia
Police officers on bicycles volunteered to ride beside children from Mary Lin Elementary School in Atlanta, Georgia.

- Put a notice in your neighborhood newsletter or local paper.
- If your neighborhood already has a formal neighborhood organization that meets regularly, this is a great way to introduce the program, announce a meeting of the community, and ask for program volunteers.

2. Hold an informal neighborhood meeting.

Present the KidsWalk-to-School program to your neighbors.

Be prepared to discuss concerns that members of your community may have about the program. Be positive and look for solutions to concerns together as a community.

At the informal meeting

a. Assign tasks that need to be completed during Step Three: Assess (pp. 11–13). Write down the names of people who are willing to volunteer for each task and agree on a reasonable target date for completing the task.

	Volunteer(s)	Date to be completed
1. Distribute the walk-to-school survey:		
• make copies of survey	_____	_____
• give the survey to neighborhood parents	_____	_____
2. Obtain a map of your community	_____	_____
3. Carry out a Walkable Routes to School Survey:		
• organize neighborhood walkability assessment	_____	_____
• participate in the neighborhood walkability assessment	_____	_____
• work with an official at your local public works department to discuss how to fix problems identified on the walkability survey.	_____	_____
4. Examine the results of the surveys:		
• key the map using results of the walk-to-school survey and the walkability survey	_____	_____
• develop a participant roster	_____	_____
• contact volunteers	_____	_____
5. Prepare results to present at the planning meeting	_____	_____

Not everyone will volunteer to help, but assume that everyone would like to help—ask for a skill they have or offer to teach them how to do a certain task.

b. List the resources needed for these and future tasks related to the program and plan ways to get them. Some people may not be able to volunteer their time, but they may be interested in providing computers, fax machines, copy machines, or names of other people who may help.

c. Pick a time, date, and place for the planning meeting.

Step Three: Assess

Gathering information about your community will help you develop a walk-to-school program that fits your neighborhood's needs. The following tasks will help you gather this information.

1. Provide a walk-to-school survey to parents.

Distribute the walk-to-school survey (Tool B, p. 54) to everyone in your neighborhood; mail it, go door-to-door and meet with neighbors to ask them the questions on the survey in person (this is particularly useful if you are working with limited resources and it is difficult to make copies of the survey for everyone in the neighborhood), or hand it out at the informal meeting (Step Two). To ensure that you get a sufficient response, it is a good idea to specify a deadline for returning the surveys.

Results of the walk-to-school survey can be used to

- demonstrate a need for a walk-to-school program;
- gain information about how to structure your program to meet the needs of each child and family;
- provide information about barriers to program participation, safety concerns, and the location of families; and
- compare with future survey results (ideally, the survey can be conducted again at the end of the school year to see how many people have changed the way they travel to school since the KidsWalk-to-School program began).

2. Obtain a map of the neighborhood and school area.

It is best to work with your county or city planning, public works, or transportation office to obtain a good community map. In addition to this map, look at maps from parks and recreation offices, local bicycle shops, and auto clubs—each one may tell you something different about your community. When contacting your local planning, public works, or transportation offices let them know your neighborhood is conducting a survey. Find out if they have staff, such as a pedestrian coordinator, who can help look at the walkability of your neighborhood.

Sidewalks with cracked, uneven pavement and no ramp make it difficult for strollers and wheelchairs to cross.

3. Take a walk around the neighborhood and the school to assess safety and walkability.

a. When you assess the walkability

- Get together with other parents, neighbors, and children and use the Walkable Routes to School Survey (see Tool C, p. 57) to evaluate the walking and bicycling routes from your community to the school.

- Walk with a stroller, wheelchair, or wagon to help determine whether the path is accessible for parents with young children and persons who may use wheelchairs or walkers.
- Get young people and older adults to help with the walkability survey. They may see problems that others may miss.
- Invite the media along for your walk. Point out issues that concern the safety of your neighborhood.

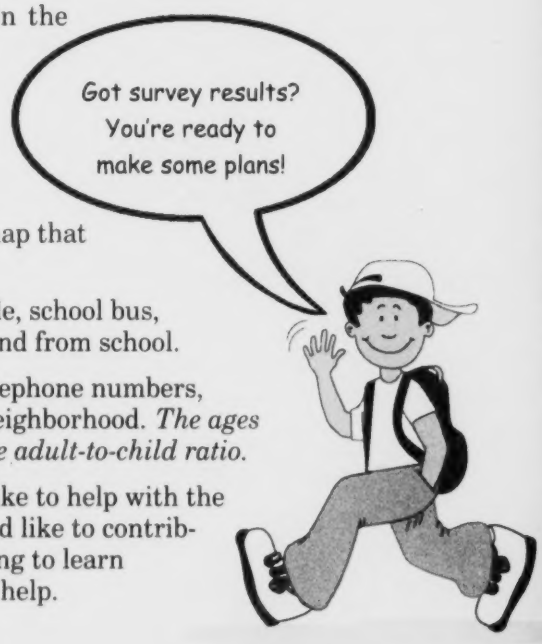
b. Once the Walkable Routes to School Survey has been completed, meet with the appropriate person at the local public works department.
   - Discuss the problems identified and any others the public works official noticed.
   - Talk about how these problems can be fixed.
   - Secure a commitment of appropriate timelines for fixing problems.
   - It is best to follow-up this meeting with a letter identifying the problems discussed and any corrective actions that were agreed upon.

c. Meet the public works official in your neighborhood to walk along the route to school and point out concerns you identified while completing the Walkable Routes to School Survey.

For information and advice on how to make your route to school more walkable and how to deal effectively with elected officials and engineering and design professionals, refer to Working with Elected Officials on p. 31, Promoting the KidsWalk-to-School Program Through Policies on p. 33, Funding for KidsWalk-to-School Programs on p. 35, and Traffic Calming on p. 39.

4. Use the results of the Walkable Routes to School Survey and the Walk-to-School Survey to plan your walk-to-school program.

a. Use color-coded markings on the map to indicate
   - homes of children who will be participating in the program or go to the school;
   - safe street crossings, bus stops, bicycle paths, walkways; and
   - dangerous areas (unsafe crossings, gang hang-outs, drug dealing corridors, etc.).



b. Identify potential routes to and from school on the map that are safe and convenient.

c. Add the number of children who walk or ride a bicycle, school bus, public bus, or train, automobile, or other vehicle to and from school.

d. Develop a participant roster that contains names, telephone numbers, addresses, ages, and grade levels of children in the neighborhood. *The ages of the children will help you determine an appropriate adult-to-child ratio.*

e. Contact volunteers who responded that they would like to help with the walk-to-school program and ask them how they would like to contribute. Ask them to attend the program planning meeting to learn more about what needs to be done and how they can help.

A partnership between the Department of Public Works and the Department of Education in Howard County, Maryland, has resulted in the installation of miles of new sidewalks that enable students to walk to and from school safely instead of riding a school bus. Before these sidewalks were installed, students who lived within walking distance of school rode a bus for safety reasons. The lack of sidewalks also prevented parents from walking their children to school on evenings and weekends to use playgrounds, basketball courts, and fields located on or near school grounds. In addition to improving child safety, the sidewalks allow other members of the community to walk, jog, or bicycle through their neighborhood and to walk to nearby recreational areas and shopping centers.

Step Four: Plan

1. Hold a KidsWalk-to-School program planning meeting.

At the program planning meeting

a. Present results of the neighborhood walkability survey and the walk-to-school survey.

b. Define objectives or goals for your walking program.

Examples of some objectives you may want to adopt are to increase the number of children in the neighborhood who walk to and from school from 3 to 10 children, to plant trees along the route to school, and to contact the Department of Public Works about putting in more street lights.

c. Set priorities and deadlines for your action plan. Use the results of the neighborhood walkability survey and discussions with the public works department to develop an action plan for correcting walkability concerns.

- Do not plan to tackle every problem at once.
- Identify the issues that need immediate action, and then prioritize the others.
- Make sure deadlines are reasonable.

You may want to consider making small changes immediately, such as adding traffic signs, crossing guards, and pavement markings, and removing graffiti. Long-term changes, such as getting sidewalks, may require more effort and time and should be prioritized as long-term goals.

d. Assign tasks to volunteers. Write down the names of people willing to volunteer for each task and agree on a reasonable target date for completing the task.

	Volunteer(s)	Date to be completed
• Set up a committee to stay on top of the action plan for correcting walkability concerns identified in the walkability survey	_____	_____
• Set up a committee to discuss safety measures	_____	_____
• Organize an adult leaders' schedule	_____	_____
• Organize a practice walk	_____	_____
• Plan a kickoff (Step Five: 1)	_____	_____
• Evaluate the program (Step Six)	_____	_____

Older people in the community are ideal volunteers for the KidsWalk-to-School program. They are usually enthusiastic about participating in something that benefits the community and children and are more likely to be home during the times that children would be walking to and from school.

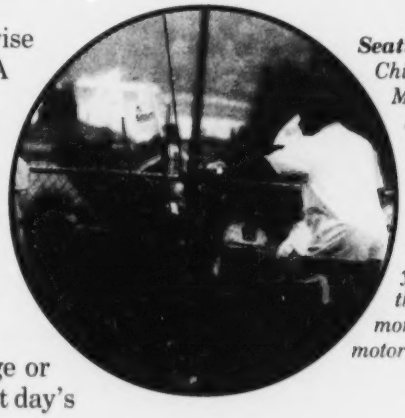
e. Plan your time.

f. Send all participants an organizational chart that includes the tasks, who will complete them, and when they will be completed. Contact information for all participants should be included with the chart.

2. Decide what safety precautions must be taken.

Use information from the Safety Tips (see p. 37), your local police department, and your local SAFE KIDS coalition to consider safety precautions for your walk-to-school program. The following are a few to consider:

a. Decide how many adults are needed to supervise the children walking to and from school. A good ratio is one adult per six children, but with younger children (ages 4–6) you may want to keep a ratio of one adult per three children, and with older children (10 and older) you may be able to have a larger ratio. Each situation is different and depends on the children who participate. A very large group may be divided into sections.



Seattle, Washington *Children of Bryn Mawr Elementary School walked to school on National Walk Our Children to School Day while waving yellow flags so they would be more visible to motorists.*

b. You can ask parents to wear a specific badge or tag identifying them as an adult leader of that day's walk to school.

c. Plan what to do if a child must stay after school or misses the group to walk home. Adult leaders should be advised to never let a child leave school with anyone else unless the parent has provided the leader with instructions to do so.

d. Adult leaders should learn pedestrian safety rules so that they can demonstrate appropriate behavior to the group of children and be aware of possible dangers when walking. Organizations that may be able to provide pedestrian safety training are your local department of transportation, police department, health department, or SAFE KIDS Coalition.

e. Adult leaders must remember that they are setting an example for the children and should model appropriate safety habits. For example, adult leaders should actually turn their heads from left to right to left instead of just moving their eyes back and forth as experienced walkers often do before crossing.

f. Before you start you may want to remind neighborhood residents that the KidsWalk-to-School program will begin soon.

- Send them the mapped route the children will be walking to and from school.
- Ask them to take particular caution as they drive during the morning and afternoon hours when children will be walking to and from school.

g. It may alleviate some concerns if adult leaders agree to undergo a voluntary background check. Contact your local law enforcement agency on background check rules and procedures.

Susan Beeching of Atlanta, Georgia, and her two children meet 3 other children at the corner of their street and walk to school as a group daily.

3. Organize adult leaders' schedules.

Use the information from the parent survey to find out which parents want to lead a walk to school. You may suggest that these volunteers meet separately to work out schedules and develop a calendar. The following several issues should be considered:

a. Where should the children wait for the pickup? At the end of their driveway, in the lobby of their apartment building, at a specific bus stop, or another location?

b. Where will the children meet at the end of the school day for the walk home?

c. Who will serve as a backup when an adult leader is unable to walk at the last minute, and how will these changes be communicated?

d. What will you do in case of severe weather? Similar programs have continued to operate even if it is raining or snowing, but on days when the weather becomes potentially hazardous, you should reconsider walking.

e. How long will the group wait for a participant before continuing the walk?

f. What is inappropriate behavior and what are the consequences?

4. Send out parental consent forms.

Check with the school to find out specific rules on its parental consent policies.

Your neighborhood may also want parents to sign a parental consent form (see Tool D, p. 59), which informs parents about the program and any potential risks. By signing the form, parents are simply giving permission for their child to participate in the walk-to-school program.

5. Conduct a practice walk to and from school.

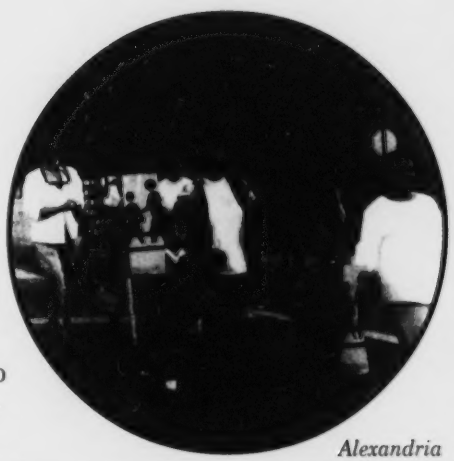
Children, parents, and adult leaders should do a practice walk to and from school. You may decide to schedule the practice walk on a weekend or evening so all parents and children can

To help make walks safe and comfortable—

- Encourage children to wear bright or fluorescent colors during the day and reflector tape on their backpacks or jackets during darker hours of the day.
- Bring along a wagon to carry the children's belongings.
- Encourage children to wear comfortable shoes and clothing appropriate for the temperature and weather conditions (see Program Variations, p. 21).
- In warmer climates it may be advisable for children to carry a water bottle.
- Remind children to eat a balanced breakfast to help provide the energy they need for optimum physical performance.
- Adult leaders may want to carry a cellular telephone to use in emergencies.

participate. This practice will

- determine how long it takes to get to school;
- identify any problems that might occur;
- allow you to correct problems before the kickoff day;
- enable parents to show their children what behavior they expect each day during the walk; and
- provide an opportunity for participants to meet each other.



Alexandria Avenue Elementary School National Walk Our Children to School Day, October 1999

Step Five: Implement

1. Sponsor a KidsWalk-to-School kickoff event.

A kickoff event is a great way to get people excited about and to celebrate a new program. Some suggestions for a KidsWalk-to-School kickoff event include:

- Inviting members of the community, such as local law enforcement officers or local celebrities, to participate in the event and walk to school with your group.
- Providing muffins and juice at the meeting spot for the walk to school as well as handouts, such as reflector badges, for the children.
- Sending out a press release (see Tool E, p. 60), invite members of the media to be present at the kickoff, and prepare a story on your KidsWalk-to-School program—this coverage may encourage others to begin programs in their neighborhoods.

On National Walk Our Children to School Day, the children in Oakland, California, walked to school with Mayor Elihu Harris. The children in Las Vegas, Nevada, shared refreshments with then-Governor Bob Miller. In Silver Spring, Maryland, McGruff the Crime Dog® walked to school with the children of East Silver Spring Elementary School.

National Walk Our Children to School Day is a great time to kick off your program! For more information on the National and International Walk Our Children to School Days see the Resources section under Partnership for a Walkable America on p. 47 or The University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center on p. 44.

Step Six: Evaluate

1. At the end of each term, evaluate your program.

a. Ask students, teachers, parents, school administrators, and other groups involved with KidsWalk-to-School what they think of the program. What do they like and what do they think can be done better? Collect the success stories and use them in a newsletter or an update letter to send to your partnering organizations (e.g., school and public works departments).

b. Fill out the KidsWalk-to-School evaluation form (see Tool F, p. 61). Use this evaluation to see how your program is working and how to improve it.

2. Keep an eye on the progress of your program.

a. Monitor and address participants' concerns and revise routes, objectives, and strategies as necessary. Why is this important?

- To confirm that the program is meeting its goals and objectives.
- To identify successes and problems.
- To generate additional support for the program.
- To help others who are planning a KidsWalk-to-School program.

b. Keep the school and other partnering organizations informed about participation, problems, and improvements to the KidsWalk-to-School program.

Step Seven: Look to the Future

1. Keep your program going.

a. Plan for the next school term's program, as children will be graduating elementary or middle school. New parent organizers and leaders will be needed.

b. When new school terms begin, create a feeling of excitement among the walkers by planning a special outing or doing something special on the first day back.

Drawing hung outside the office at East Silver Spring Elementary School, Silver Spring, Maryland, to promote walking to school.

After the KidsWalk-to-School program is under way, it is important to keep morale high and motivate participants, especially as the weather becomes less pleasant. To keep the neighborhood excited about the program, it might help to include daily activities or weekly and monthly contests (see Having Fun: Ideas to Generate Children's Enthusiasm on p. 25). You can also distribute informational letters about the program at parent–teacher conferences or ask the editor of your child's school newsletter to include a section about the program.

Some local organizations may also want to be a part of your KidsWalk-to-School program. For example, check with your local health department, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, or the American Lung Association. These organizations may be willing to sponsor, provide helpful information, or acknowledge volunteers for participation. The more support a program has, the greater its chance of lasting for a long time. See the Resources section on how to contact these organizations on p. 41.

2. Look for ways to expand your KidsWalk-to-School program.

a. Promote the success of the KidsWalk-to-School program to other neighborhoods, the school, and the community. Here are some ways to do this:

- Promote the program by word of mouth.
- Include articles in your school's newsletter.
- Post your own newsletter at the school.
- Present your program at the next PTA meeting.
- Ask a local news station to do a story.
- Write an editorial for your local paper. (See Working with the Media on p. 29.)

b. Conduct an informal schoolwide travel-to-school survey to find out how children get to and from school. Request that teachers ask their students to raise their hands to indicate how they got to school each morning for a week; have teachers record the responses and take the results to the administrator's office. You may be surprised at how many children are driven to school and how infrequently they walk. This survey may get your school interested in expanding the program to other neighborhoods that feed the school.

c. Help other neighborhoods start walk-to-school programs. You can help them organize KidsWalk-to-School programs by guiding them through the specific steps that were difficult, by sharing ideas that were useful, and by explaining how you overcame barriers. Remember that every neighborhood is different and will have different barriers and successes.

3. Planning the program on a larger scale.

You may want to plan a KidsWalk-to-School program for an entire subdivision, school, or school system. Many of the steps for organizing a larger scale program are similar to the neighborhood program, but there are several considerations:

- Present the program to your school's PTA.
- Once you have established interest, form a committee that includes representatives from all participating groups, such as teachers, crossing guards, the school principal, and the transportation committee.
- Include all students in the KidsWalk-to-School program and not just the ones who live within walking distance of the school. Everyone can gain from the message of KidsWalk-to-School and participate in different ways. Use some of the other ideas from Program Variations (see p. 21): have schoolwide contests for walking the most in a particular week or month or include pedestrian safety, air pollution reduction, physical activity, and related topics in the school curriculum.
- Have each neighborhood come up with a name for their group that distinguishes them from other walk-to-school groups. Design signs for each group that will help young children identify their group at the end of the school day.

4. Take steps to secure a walkable community far into the future. Establish long-term goals.

Once members of your community experience the neighborhood as pedestrians, they will pull together to change the streets to accommodate children and adults who want to walk and bicycle. Changing the structure and lifestyle of your community can be difficult. It will be necessary to write letters to city council members, county commissioners, and other elected officials. Examples of more extensive changes that can be made include changing the dimensions of an intersection in order to reduce traffic speeds, putting in more sidewalks, altering the structure and flow of traffic, and implementing traffic-calming measures (see Traffic Calming on p. 39). Many organizations offer materials and support to promote the design of healthy, walkable communities (see Resources on p. 41).

The Danish city of Odense launched the Safe Routes to School project in response to the large number of children who were killed in traffic collisions. Community members, teachers, politicians, and civil servants gathered to change dangerous streets into safe streets. Three years later, the number of pedestrians hurt by cars was reduced by 85%.

PROGRAM VARIATIONS:
Making KidsWalk-to-School Fit in Your Community

After assessing your community, you may find that the KidsWalk-to-School program needs to be altered for your neighborhood. Below are some ideas to help adapt the program to meet the special needs and conditions of your community.

Bicycling/Skating Program

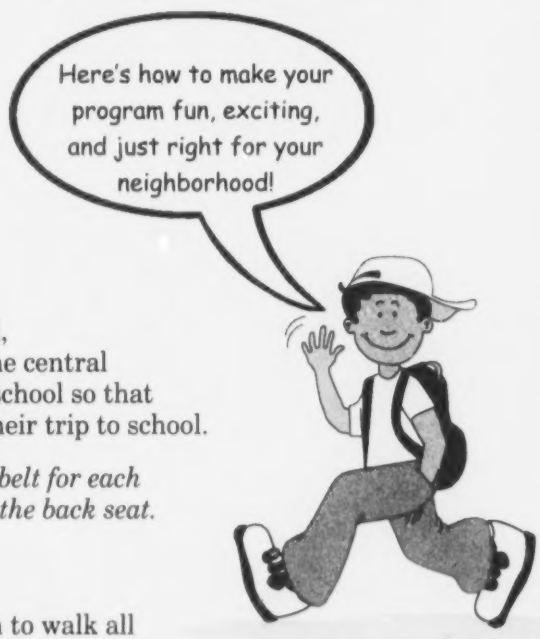
Depending on your neighborhood, the comfort level of the parents, and the age of the participating children, the KidsWalk-to-School program may include bicycles and in-line skates. Regardless of the mode of transportation, require everyone to wear appropriate safety gear, such as helmets, kneepads, elbow pads, and wrist guards, and be aware of other safety considerations.

Eyes on the Kids

Some residents in the neighborhood along the mapped route to and from school may be enlisted as "eyes on the kids" for a few minutes each morning or afternoon. These neighbors can stand by their mailbox or sit on their porch as the children pass by on their way to and from school, remaining available for any emergencies. This additional supervision and source of assistance will increase the number of community members who are able to participate, even if it's for only a few minutes each day. Experience has shown that the more community members who are involved, the more the community feels that it owns the program. This sense of ownership and responsibility helps the program continue once the initial enthusiasm fades. A participating home can be identified by a sticker on the mailbox or a flag in the yard to let the children know that this is an "eyes on the kids" home.

Walking Buddies

A few older children may want to walk together without parent escorts. It also may be possible for a reliable and mature older child to escort a younger child to and from school each day. These options work well with the "eyes on the kids" variation.



Carpool

On days when it is necessary to drive children to school, implement a carpool plan. Have the children walk to one central location to meet the adult who will be driving them to school so that they are still able to include some physical activity in their trip to school.

Every vehicle should be properly equipped with a safety belt for each passenger and all children under age 12 should ride in the back seat.

Park and Walk

If a neighborhood is too far from the school for children to walk all the way, coordinate a walk-to-school program from a park or neighborhood closer to the school. Instead of carpooling the children all the way to

the school, stop at a spot with an appropriate walking route, park the car, and walk with the children to school. This will get everyone active and reduce congestion around the school.

Another variation of park and walk is to work with a neighborhood that is closer to the school to set up a walk-to-school program. Carpools from distant neighborhoods can join the group and walk to school from this neighborhood. This setup takes some planning and collaboration among people in your neighborhood and those in the neighborhood closer to the school.

Bus Stop Pickup

To reduce the number of stops that a bus makes and to get children who must ride the bus to and from school to be more active, have children walk in groups accompanied by adults to one central bus stop in your neighborhood.

Walking in Different Seasons

Changing seasons bring changing weather. Some of the enthusiasm of the group may be lost as the weather turns bad. The group should come up with incentives to continue walking in less favorable conditions (see Having Fun: Ideas to Generate Children's Enthusiasm, p. 25).

Time Changes.

- As the time changes in your area, there may be periods when children are walking in the dark. In darker hours of the day, they should wear reflective clothing to alert motorists that pedestrians are present.
- During lighter hours of the day children should wear bright colors to keep them visible to drivers. Bicyclists should use flashing bicycle lights during darker hours of the day.
- Put reflective tape on all sides of children's umbrellas to ensure they are visible when it is raining.

Hot Weather.

- Encourage children to wear sunscreen, sun visors or hats, and light clothing.
- Children dehydrate faster than adults do, so it is important for them to drink water as they are walking. Suggest to parents that their children have water bottles for the walk to and from school.
- Be aware of the symptoms of heat exhaustion, which include weakness, fatigue, dizziness, muscle ache, headache, profuse sweating, rapid heart beat, intense thirst, hyperventilation, and elevated temperature. If these symptoms occur, contact emergency medical assistance immediately.

Cold Weather.

- Although walking raises your heart rate, which warms the body naturally, it is important for children and adults to bundle up and layer clothing in cold weather and wear hats, gloves, and warm socks.
- Contact your local transportation department and ask them to clear the snow off the sidewalks on your route.
- In addition, be aware that ice on the road, poor visibility, and heavy rain can send a car or bus off the road in your direction.

Organizing in Multicultural Neighborhoods

Organizing a KidsWalk-to-School program in multicultural communities poses unique challenges due to language barriers. Ask local government agencies, private advocacy and service organizations, religious institutions, mediation services, and other groups for help with translation. Translation is also essential when you are planning fliers, letters, and meetings. Multilingual children may be an excellent source for translation and for helping their parents understand the KidsWalk-to-School program and how they may participate.

Students from La Mesa Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, are walking to school.

Crime and Violence

For some neighborhoods, violence and crime may be a minor issue; for others, it may be a daily presence. The threat of any kind of violence can keep students away from school and leave them in fear every day. It is important to identify and eliminate neighborhood trouble spots before implementing the KidsWalk-to-School program. The KidsWalk-to-School program may be a deterrent to crime because most criminals attack victims who are alone.

By having an organized group of neighbors, you are already one step ahead in forming a neighborhood watch program or making other community changes. Remind neighbors to report crimes or suspicious activities to police immediately and contact your local police department to let them know you are interested in starting a neighborhood crime watch.

In Chicago, the City's Alternative Policing Strategy Program (CAPS), Mayor's Office, department of transportation, and board of education have developed a citywide walk-to-school program. It was first tested in North America's largest public housing community, Robert Taylor Homes, where gang-related shootings had caused high rates of school truancy. Parents and caregivers were paid to escort children to and from school, and, as a result, over 90% of the students returned to school.

A community near La Mesa Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, once attracted crack-cocaine customers who sped into the neighborhood, bought their drugs, and sped out. This market put pedestrians at risk from the high volume and high speeds of vehicular traffic. The community worked to put in traffic-calming measures, such as speed bumps and traffic diverters that were funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Traffic decreased by 40%, and there hasn't been a murder in the area since the measures were implemented.

HAVING FUN:
Ideas to Generate Children's Enthusiasm

Walking to school is a way for children to learn about the environment, their health, and their safety. You can encourage this learning by incorporating fun activities into the journey to and from school. When selecting activities, keep in mind the ages and maturity levels of students in the group. Some suggested activities follow.

Traffic Cops

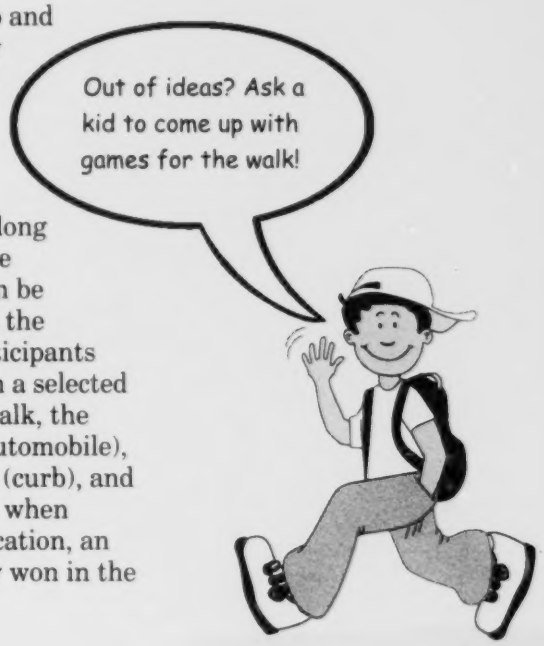
Give children small spiral notepads to record traffic and pedestrian violations they see as they walk to school, such as cars not coming to a complete stop at stop signs, drivers not using their signal when turning or changing lanes, and jay walking. Kids can also carry signs with smiling faces to point at good drivers. This activity helps children become alert pedestrians and more pedestrian-conscious drivers when they, too, are operating an automobile.

Environmental Inspectors

Give children grocery bags to fill with trash they find along the route to school. When you play Environmental Inspectors, it is necessary to warn children about picking up dangerous trash, such as needles and glass. You may want to provide children with gloves when they are picking up debris.

Eye Spy

Allow children to pick an Eye Spy theme for the walk to and from school. Examples are Eye Spy safe things, Eye Spy dangerous things, Eye Spy things that pollute, and Eye Spy things that promote physical activity.



Theme Days

Children and adults can come up with themes that go along with each day of the week. For example, Mondays can be "yellow day" when everyone wears yellow; Tuesdays can be "say day" when everyone tries not to say a chosen word the whole trip; Wednesdays can be "rhyme time" when participants say as many words as they can think of that rhyme with a selected word; Thursdays can be "alphabet day" when as they walk, the children must find something that starts with an 'A' (automobile), then something that starts with a 'B' (bicycle), then 'C' (curb), and so on, in alphabetical order; Fridays can be "story day," when children take turns describing their favorite book or vacation, an embarrassing moment, or how they would spend money won in the lottery.

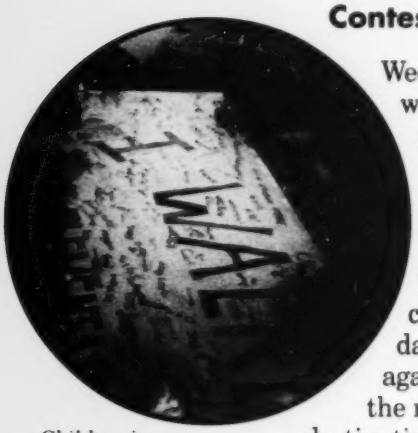
Pollution Stoppers

Have the children calculate how much they are reducing pollution by walking and bicycling to and from school. The Environmental Defense Fund has a great pollution calculator on the Internet (www.edf.org/programs/ppa/vlc/driving_practices.html). Kids can make a big thermometer to track how much they are decreasing pollution.

Journal Writing

Encourage children to keep a journal. Children might enjoy documenting their personal experiences during their walking or bicycling adventures. They can record events that occur, conversations had, friendships formed, and animals seen.

Contests



Children in Boulder, Colorado, sign their names on the "I Walked" banner.

Weekly or monthly contests are a great way to get children to walk to and from school. One idea is to have children record how many miles they have walked in a week or month. These miles can include destinations other than school. The child who has walked the most or a certain amount each week or month wins a prize or privilege.

If there are children who are unable to participate in the contest because they are disabled or live in areas where it is too dangerous to walk, it may be better to have classes compete against each other instead of individuals. Entire classes can record the number of miles they walked or biked to school and other destinations, and the class that goes the farthest can win a prize.

Classroom Involvement

Teachers at school can involve their students in the KidsWalk-to-School program by planning student inspections of the school grounds for unsafe paths or areas. Students can record the unsafe areas and discuss ways to improve the identified hazards.

- Students can write letters to their school officials, police department, or the transportation department to ask them to address these hazards.
- Mapping areas that need improvement and need safe walking paths can be very helpful. The map created can be used to inform local authorities about areas of need, and is also a great tool for teaching children about mapping skills.
- Geography classes can draw maps of walking routes and surrounding areas; biology classes can use walks as an opportunity to pick up leaves and seed pods; average walking distances, speeds, or mileage totals can be calculated in math classes; and for English classes, poetry or stories can be composed or recited during the walks.

Such involvement can add acceptance and permanence to your KidsWalk-to-School program.

Young Mentors

Older kids can be mentors to younger kids. Invite middle, high school, or college students to take part in planning and developing your KidsWalk-to-School program. Younger kids typically look up to older kids and are more likely to be excited about a project when they are involved.

Students in a health and physical education course at Virginia Tech helped plan the Walk Our Children to School Day Event in Blacksburg, Virginia, as part of a class project. Approximately 80 college students turned out to walk with the children. Fifty of the students were athletes who played on various teams at Virginia Tech.

Members of the Virginia Tech women's lacrosse team walk to school with children from Margaret Beeks Elementary School, Blacksburg, Virginia.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Media coverage is a terrific way to get your message out to more people in the community. The media can help you recruit partners and participants as well as draw attention to the goal of your program. Publicity can add to the success of your events, increase audience recognition of your organization, and increase participation in your KidsWalk-to-School program.

What Makes News?

The media may be interested in many different aspects of your walk-to-school program. When you want media coverage, send information about your program or a particular program event to your local newspaper and TV station (see Tool E, p. 60) to let them know the details. Here are just a few ways to get the media involved in your program.

Walking/Bicycling Events

Invite the media to your kickoff event at the beginning of each term. In addition, you may want to send out information during the year to let them know that your community is still supporting walking to school.

Seasonal Physical Activity

Stories can be developed that highlight children walking and bicycling to school during different seasons. For example, in the winter, bundled up kids having fun on the way to school is a great way to show that a community can be in motion all year long.

(Use the Having Fun: Ideas to Generate Children's Enthusiasm section on p. 25 to spark community interest in your program.)

Children's Involvement in the Community

When you establish your program, you will find that children really care about having the freedom to walk and bicycle on their streets and, as a result, they will become more involved in their community. They will be enthusiastic about their KidsWalk-to-School program and the media may want to cover this aspect of your program.

For example, send the Pollution Stoppers results to the media to let them know that, by walking and bicycling to school, children are decreasing pollution in your neighborhood.

Be creative when drawing attention to the program. Stories of healthy and active children are interesting to everyone in the community.

Here are some helpful hints for obtaining media coverage:

- Whenever you can, meet reporters, editors, and producers face-to-face. Bring the articles and materials you want them to use in their coverage of the program.
- If a story covering the program appears somewhere, send a thank-you note to the station, paper, or magazine.
- Media can do more than merely cover a story—they can also take part in the program. Invite a television station, radio station, local cable network, or area newspaper to co-sponsor an event.
- Another interesting way to use the media to draw attention to the program is to encourage weather forecasters to include a weather-appropriate tip with their forecast; for example, they could state, "All kids walking to school tomorrow morning, bundle up in your hats and gloves . . . it's going to be cold."

Giving Interviews

An interview is an important way to inform the community about the KidsWalk-to-School program. Because of this, it is good to prepare thoroughly for an interview. Before speaking with the media, organize information and, if necessary, write important points about the program on notecards. Interviewers will no doubt ask questions about the program, but having key points written down and organized will help provide the most simple, clear, and easy-to-understand responses.

WORKING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

Government officials, from Congressmen to school board members, can have a significant effect on policies that support the KidsWalk-to-School program. Elected officials need up-to-date information and data to make informed decisions. Be sure to give them visible support for any stands or actions they take that promote livable community issues.

Tips for Working with Elected Officials:

- Organize. At this point you already have an identified group of individuals and organizations who are interested in a common goal — making your community safer for children to walk to school. This is important because organized groups have more credibility and influence than individuals; a mix of people bring valuable and different perspectives to the issues; and groups and organizations bring increased community contacts and awareness to your efforts.
- Don't give up — be persistent. If public officials know that you are not going to go away they will eventually work with you. When the next project comes along they will be more likely to listen to you and may seek your advice.
- Provide solutions and alternatives. Express your concerns and your reasoning clearly. Listen with an open mind to the needs of your opponents. Try to offer alternatives that can meet their needs and still achieve your objectives.
- Respect your opponents — be courteous. A relationship of mutual respect will pay off again and again.
- Get expert help. Get help from traffic engineers, landscape architects, grassroots groups, and lawyers. These allies can provide general background advice, write letters of support, and provide technical services when developing a plan to present to public officials.

Action Steps for Working with Elected Officials:

- Write letters to politicians asking for support for KidsWalk-to-School. Know their voting records and positions on matters related to transportation and land use.
- Attend zoning, parks and recreation, school board and public works meetings. Ask that pedestrian issues be included on the agenda. Insist that these issues be considered each time a decision is made.
- Urge support for increased funding for safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists in the community.
- Help build a political advocacy base. Join a network of other individuals who care about these issues and help to keep each other informed and active.
- Arrange to visit local politicians' offices. Bring written material describing your views, and bring influential experts such as political donors, community leaders, or medical professionals.
- Hold a community meeting and invite local politicians to attend.
- Set up a table in a well-traveled area such as a community event or the local market, where petitions, postcards, or letters can be collected and delivered to politicians representing that district.

- Invite politicians to visit the neighborhood and join a KidsWalk-to-School group on a walk to school one morning or afternoon.
- Find out where politicians will be speaking. Attend and ask questions about these issues.
- Place a paid local newspaper advertisement aimed at political decision makers.
- Hold a news conference with a supportive politician to spotlight policy needs, pending legislation, community projects, or other media events.
- Vote. Help register others to vote. Join get-out-the-vote efforts on election day.

For more information see *Guide to Bicycle Advocacy* (Bikes Belong, see Resources p. 46) and *Improving Pedestrian Access to Transit — An Advocacy Handbook* (WalkBoston, see Resources p. 47).

PROMOTING THE KIDSWALK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM THROUGH POLICIES

Walking and bicycling issues have grown in significance throughout the 1990s, and now public agencies and public interest groups are striving to define appropriate ways to accommodate walking and bicycling within the overall transportation system. The goal is for many more of us to walk and bicycle and to be able to do so safely, conveniently, and comfortably across the whole community.

Public support and advocacy for improved conditions for walking and bicycling has created widespread acceptance that more should be done to enhance the safety, comfort, and convenience of the nonmotorized traveler. Opinion surveys throughout the 1990s have demonstrated strong public support for increased planning, funding, and implementation of shared use paths, sidewalks, and on-street facilities.

During the 1990s, Congress supported a movement towards a transportation system that is somewhat more friendly to people with passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (1998). Walking and bicycling have emerged as indicators for the health and well-being of a community. People want to live and work in places where they can safely and conveniently walk and/or bicycle. Worsening traffic congestion, road rage, and the fight for a parking space are helping fuel our interest in pedestrian-friendly environments.

Policy Statement

The United States Department of Transportation encourages states, local governments, professional associations, other government agencies, and community organizations to adopt this policy statement as an indication of their commitment to accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians as an integral element of the transportation system.

1. Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects in all urbanized areas unless one or more of three conditions are met:
   - Bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right of way or within the same transportation corridor.
   - The cost of establishing bikeways or walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use. Excessively disproportionate is defined as exceeding 20 percent of the cost of the larger transportation project.
   - Where sparsity of population or other factors indicate an absence of need. For example, the Portland Pedestrian Guide requires all construction of new public streets to include sidewalk improvements on both sides, unless the street is a cul-de-sac with four or fewer dwellings, or the street has severe topographic or natural resource constraints.
2. In rural areas, paved shoulders should be included in all new construction and reconstruction projects on roadways used by more than 1,000 vehicles per day, as in states such as Wisconsin. Paved shoulders have safety and operational advantages for all road users in addition to providing a place for bicyclists and pedestrians to operate.

Rumble strips are not recommended where shoulders are used by bicyclists unless there is a minimum clear path of four feet in which a bicycle may safely operate.

3. Sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings (including overcrossings and undercrossings), pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture (such as benches), transit stops and facilities, and all connecting pathways shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so that all pedestrians, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.
4. The design and development of the transportation infrastructure shall improve conditions for bicycling and walking through the following additional steps:
   - Planning projects for the long-term. Transportation facilities are long-term investments that remain in place for many years. The design and construction of new facilities that meet the criteria in item 1 shall anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements. For example, a bridge that is likely to remain in place for 50 years might be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation that facilities will be available at either end of the bridge even if that is not currently the case.
   - Addressing the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists and pedestrians may not commonly use a particular travel corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. Therefore, the design of intersections and interchanges shall accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible, and convenient.
   - Getting exceptions approved at a senior level. Exceptions for the noninclusion of bikeways and walkways shall be approved by a senior manager and be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision.
   - Designing facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines. The design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians should follow design guidelines and standards that are commonly used, such as the AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*, and the ITE *Recommended Practice Design and Safety of Pedestrian Facilities*.

For more information read *Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach* and *A US DOT Policy Statement on Integrating Bicycling and Walking into Transportation Infrastructure* at www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/design.htm.

FUNDING FOR KIDSWALK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

KidsWalk-to-School is intended to be a cost-free program; however, improving the pedestrian environment generally will require funding. Fortunately, most of the funding to support pedestrian and bicycle facility improvement may be obtained through state and local departments of transportation.

Walking and bicycling are important elements of an integrated, intermodal transportation system. Constructing sidewalks, installing bicycle parking at transit stations, teaching children to ride and walk safely, installing curb cuts and ramps for wheelchairs, striping bicycle lanes, and building trails all contribute to our national transportation goals of safety, mobility, economic growth and trade, enhancement of communities and the natural environment, and national security.

All of these activities, and many more, are eligible for funding as part of the Federal-Aid Highway Program. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), signed into law on June 9, 1998, enhances the ability of communities to invest in projects that can improve the safety and practicality of walking and bicycling for everyday travel and confirms the place of walking and bicycling in the mainstream of transportation decision making at the state and local levels.

It should also be noted that many improvements can be made simply by choosing pedestrian/kid-friendly options during planning, maintenance, and development efforts. Decisions about city traffic engineering, police enforcement, and zoning are often made without adequate pedestrian mobility considerations.

For more information visit the Federal Highway Administration Bicycle and Pedestrian program Web site at www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm.

SAFETY TIPS

Here are some simple rules to reinforce and practice with your children. Remember your child's limitations; children under 10 years of age are developmentally limited when it comes to judging speed and distance accurately, and very young children may not be able to read the street and pedestrian signs yet. It is important to know the abilities of your own child because all children develop uniquely.

Drawing from a child who has been learning about pedestrian safety. Oakland, California

Walking Safety

Practice and remind children to

- Walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk and you have to walk in the road, face the traffic so that you can see cars coming and keep as far from the roadway (as far away from the traffic) as possible.
- Cross only at corners or marked crosswalks. (If there is a crosswalk button, press the button and wait for the walk sign to indicate that it is safe to cross.)
  a. Stop at the curb or edge of the road, look left, then right, and then left again (left-right-left) before you step into the street. If a car is parked where you are crossing, make sure there is no driver in the car. Then go to the edge of the car and look left-right-left until no cars are coming. Keep looking for cars while you are crossing.
  b. Walk, don't run. This gives time for drivers to see you before you enter the roadway.

Bicycling Safety

Practice and remind children to

- Always wear a helmet that is properly fitted and complies with Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Standards.
- Ride on the right side of the road or trail in a single file (one bicycle behind another) in the same direction as other vehicles and come to a complete stop before crossing streets.
- Stop completely before crossing railroad tracks and go straight across the tracks slowly.
- Always use proper hand signals when turning and stopping.
- Be courteous to pedestrians.
- Use a bicycle bell to alert pedestrians that you are passing (this is effective for preventing crashes).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

School Bus Safety

Remind children:

- When the bus arrives, stand at least three giant steps (6 feet) away from the curb.
- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk on the sidewalk or along the side of the road until you are five giant steps (10 feet) ahead of the bus. Then you can cross the street.
- Be sure the bus driver can see you and you can see the bus driver.
- Never walk behind the bus.
- If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver. Never try to pick it up first because the driver may not be able to see you.

Stranger Danger Safety

Remind children:

- Stay with a group.
- If a stranger offers you a ride, say "NO!"
- If a stranger follows you on foot, get away from him or her as quickly as you can. If a stranger follows you in a car, turn around and go the other direction.
- Never leave school with a stranger.
- Tell a trusted adult if a stranger is hanging around the school, playground, or public restroom.
- Leave items and clothing that display your name, so that a stranger can read it, at home.
- If you arrive home alone, call your mother, father, or other trusted adult to let them know you are home and all right. Keep the door locked, don't open the door for strangers, and don't tell strangers that you are home alone.
- Never accept things from a stranger.
- If a stranger asks you a question, don't talk. Run away.
- Don't go anywhere with a stranger.

A great resource for teaching and practicing safety with your children is the National SAFE KIDS campaign (www.safekids.org). *See Resources, p. 43.*

Traffic Calming: Make Your Community Safer and More Pedestrian Friendly

What is traffic calming? Traffic calming is a way to make streets safer and more pedestrian friendly by changing their design in simple ways such as adding

- medians;
- raised or enhanced crosswalks;
- roundabouts or mini-circles;
- chicanes;
- curb extensions; and
- trees and other landscaping.

These physical changes to the roadway environment affect the driver's perception of the street and cause a positive change in behavior.

Because traffic-calming methods change existing street, sidewalk, bikeway, and intersection conditions, they must meet the safety and design standards of the local jurisdiction. For these measures to be installed, they must be reviewed and approved by the city planning or transportation office.

The approval process often involves a survey of residents who will be affected and an analysis of the project's effect on the nearby area. It is always helpful to seek assistance from city or county staff and from local elected officials who might have an interest in creating walkable communities. Don't expect your traffic-calming plan to be approved and installed quickly. The plan must compete with many other roadway needs in your community, and the entire process usually takes between one to three years to complete.

Other measures that you will want to consider to make your community more walkable, bikable, and livable include

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant design features;
- marked crosswalks;
- well designed curb ramps;
- street and sidewalk lighting improvements;
- pedestrian signal timing upgrades;
- neighborhood speed watch programs;
- additional or modified street signage; and
- traffic signal enhancements.

Be sure to consider the different solutions to your particular issue and choose the traffic-calming method that is most likely to have the intended effect. For example, the posting of a stop sign to calm traffic is not a preferred method. Stops signs tell motorists to stop at a specific point; however, as cars move away from the stop sign and the intersection they tend to accelerate faster to make up for lost time. Traffic engineers call this behavior "speed spiking" or simply driving at erratic speeds. Other methods to calm neighborhood traffic are

preferred. The ideal traffic calming solution would be to smooth out the speed instead of stopping it altogether. These methods reduce noise, lessen air pollution, and create more civil driving behavior.

What about the school zone? Traffic calming around the school zone will be vital to the success of the KidsWalk-to-School Program. A variety of roadway improvements may be necessary to enhance safety and mobility for children in school zones. The use of well-trained crossing guards has been found to be one of the most effective features for assisting children to cross streets safely. Local law enforcement may be necessary in situations where drivers are speeding or not yielding to children in crosswalks or when they are making turns. Other helpful measures include parking prohibitions at intersections near schools, speed tables near crosswalks, and flashing speed limit signs.

If the school is not on a principal roadway carrying more than 4,000 vehicles per day, appropriate traffic calming features should be used to hold traffic to less than 25 m.p.h. Primary traffic management guidelines include

- Separating the modes of transportation (cars, buses, and pedestrians).
- Keeping all turning movements in the school zone at low speeds.
- Placing cones on the center line of the street before and after school to slow traffic.
- Planting trees and other landscaping along the streets.
- Providing well-identified pedestrian crossings with flashing lights.
  a. Use school crossing guards.
  b. Give priority to pedestrians and bicyclists.
  c. Do not allow motorists to cross main pedestrian routes.

For more information on traffic calming, contact Walkable Communities. (See Resources, p. 49.)

RESOURCES

The following resources may be helpful in developing your KidsWalk-to-School program.

RESOURCES TO PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP)
4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, GA 30341-3717
Web site: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp

The NCCDPHP strives to enable all people in an increasingly diverse society to lead long, healthy, and satisfying lives. To accomplish this, the NCCDPHP is in partnership with health and education agencies, major voluntary associations, the private sector, and other federal agencies.

Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity (DNPA)
Web site: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa

The DNPA concentrates on conducting research, evaluating current programs, and creating new programs in the area of physical activity and nutrition.

Active Community Environments (ACEs)
Web site: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/aces.htm

ACEs is a CDC-sponsored initiative to promote walking, bicycling, and the development of accessible recreation facilities.

American Heart Association
7272 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, TX 75231
Telephone: 800-AHA-USA1
Web site: www.americanheart.org

The American Heart Association provides people with education and information on fighting heart disease and stroke. The Web page has a great section devoted to physical activity in your daily life. The Web site provides facts, tips, and recommendations to maintain a healthy lifestyle, including information on the benefits of physical activity and tips to parents for heart healthy children. Visit www.justmove.org for your own personal online physical activity diary.

National Association for Health & Fitness–the Network of State and Governor's Councils (NAHF)
201 South Capitol Avenue, Suite 560
Indianapolis, IN 46225
Telephone: 317-237-5630
Web site: www.physicalfitness.org

NAHF is a nonprofit organization whose goal is to improve the quality of life for individuals in the United States by promoting physical fitness, sports, and healthy lifestyles.

National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
401 W. Michigan Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202
Telephone: 317-637-0349
Web site: www.ncppa.org

The National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity unites the strengths of public, private, and industry efforts into a collaborative partnership to inspire Americans to lead physically active lifestyles to enhance their health and quality of life.

Shape Up America!
6707 Democracy Boulevard
Suite 306
Bethesda, MD 20817
Web site: www.shapeup.org

The goal of Shape Up America! is to educate the public about the importance of achieving a healthy body weight through physical activity and healthy eating. Visit the Web site for some great resources to help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight, including an online guide to healthy eating and how to balance the food you eat with physical activity, an online fitness center, and a motivation and support center.

RESOURCES TO PROMOTE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY

Canadian Tire Child Protection Foundation
P.O. Box 770, Station K
Toronto, ON M4P 2V8
Canada
Telephone: 800-748-8903
Fax: 416-487-6524

The Canadian Tire Child Protection Foundation produces *Kidestrians: Practicing Traffic Safety with Kids*, a great resource for teaching and practicing pedestrian safety with your children. This easy-to-follow booklet presents simple activities you can do with your children to reinforce and help them understand pedestrian rules.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC)
4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, GA 30341-3717
Web site: www.cdc.gov/ncipc

The NCIPC works closely with other federal agencies; national, state, and local organizations; state and local health departments; and research institutions to reduce injury, disability, death, and costs associated with injuries outside the workplace.

The Bike Hub
National Bicycle Safety
Web site: www.cdc.gov/ncipc/bike/default.htm

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control developed the Bike Hub organization. The mission of this organization is to reduce the number of bicycle injuries by promoting bicycle safety.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
Traffic Safety Programs
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Telephone: 202-366-0910
Web site: www.nhtsa.dot.gov

NHTSA, part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, was established by the Highway Safety Act of 1970 and is responsible for reducing deaths, injuries, and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes. This organization also conducts research on driver behavior and traffic safety in order to develop the most efficient and effective means of bringing about safety improvements. Materials are available on pedestrian, bicycle, and school-bus safety. Spanish language materials on pedestrian safety have been developed.

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign
1301 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004-1707
Telephone: 202-662-0600
Fax: 202-393-2072
Web site: www.safekids.org

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign works through grassroots coalitions to educate and empower communities to protect children from unintentional injury. Contact SAFE KIDS to get involved in a SAFE KIDS coalition in your area.

National Safety Council
1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Telephone: 630-285-1121
Fax: 630-285-1315
Web site: www.nsc.org/library.htm

The National Safety Council is a membership organization dedicated to protecting life and promoting health. Through their Web site, access the Fact Sheet Library on many safety, health, and environmental topics. Get the latest statistics from their *Accident Facts* publication.

The University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center (HSRC)
730 Airport Road, Suite 300
Campus Box 3430
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3430
Web site: www.hsrc.unc.edu

The HSRC is a great resource on child pedestrian safety. Visit their Web site for more information on their child pedestrian safety series and the National and International Walk Our Children to School Day at www.walktoschool-usa.org; www.iwalktoschool.org.

RESOURCES TO PROMOTE HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH)
4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, GA 30341-3717
Web site: www.cdc.gov/nceh/ncehhome.htm

NCEH investigates the effects of the environment on health. They are especially committed to safeguarding the health of populations that are particularly vulnerable to certain environmental hazards—children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. NCEH responds to environmental emergencies, educates and trains various audiences, and develops standards and guidelines to help formulate public policy. Check out the kid's site for a great resource for children, www.cdc.gov/nceh/kids/99Kidsday.

Earth Force
1908 Mount Vernon, 2nd Floor
Alexandria, VA 22301
Telephone: 703-299-940
Web site: www.earthforce.org

Earth Force is a national, nonprofit organization that is youth driven and nonpartisan. Its vision is to build the most effective program to help young people aged 10–14 years, and improve the environment through developing citizenship skills and addressing real environmental issues in their communities and nation.

Environmental Working Group (EWG)
1718 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20009
Telephone: 202-667-6982
Web site: www.ewg.org

Visit the EWG Web site to obtain a copy of the *Mean Streets Report* and many other EWG publications.

Greenest City Project
244 Gerrard Street, Main Floor
Toronto, ON M5A 2G2
Canada
Telephone: 416-922-7626
Fax: 416-922-7636
Web site: www.greenestcity.org

Greenest City works with Toronto's diverse communities to take action to improve air quality, better the health of residents, regenerate urban life, and reduce greenhouse gases.

The American Lung Association
1740 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
Telephone: 212-315-8700
Web site: www.lungusa.org

The American Lung Association provides fact sheets and information on air pollution, how it affects your health, and how to protect yourself and your children.

RESOURCES TO PROMOTE CRIME PREVENTION

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550
Arlington, VA 22201-3077
Telephone: 703-235-3900
Fax: 703-235-4067
24-hour Hotline: 800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)
Web site: www.missingkids.com

As the nation's resource center for child protection, NCMEC spearheads national efforts to locate and recover missing children and raises public awareness about ways to prevent child abduction, molestation, and sexual exploitation.

National Crime Prevention Council
1000 Connecticut Ave., NW, 13th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-466-6272
Fax: 202-296-1356
Web site: www.ncpc.org

Prevention Council is a national nonprofit organization. Its mission is to help America prevent crime and build safer, stronger communities. You can explore their On-Line Resource Center for useful information about crime prevention, community building, comprehensive planning, and fun stuff for kids. This site is also available in Spanish.

RESOURCES TO PROMOTE/SUPPORT WALKING AND BIKING

America WALKs
P.O. Box 29103
Portland, OR 97210
Telephone: 503-222-1077
Fax: 503-228-0289
Web site: www.webwalking.com/amwalks

America WALKs provides a support network for local pedestrian advocacy groups. They offer advice about how to get started and how to be effective with public officials and engineering and design professionals. Visit their Web site, call, or write to find a local pedestrian organization that may be willing to assist your efforts.

Bikes Belong
1368 Beacon Street
Brookline, MA 02446-2800
Telephone: 617-734-2800
Fax: 617-734-2810
Web site: www.BikesBelong.org

Bikes Belong seeks to assist local organizations, agencies, and citizens in developing bicycle facilities projects funded by TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century). Visit their Web site, write, or call to receive a copy of the *Guide to Bicycle Advocacy*.

League of American Bicyclists
1612 K Street, NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: 202-822-1333
Fax: 202-822-1334
Web site: www.bikeleague.org

The League of American Bicyclists fights for the rights of bicyclists through an aggressive national advocacy program, promotes bicycling for recreation and transportation, and increases bicycle safety and awareness by educating bicyclists and other road users. This organization also has small cards that have the rules for bicycling for kids. These may be beneficial to hand out to walk-to-school groups.

Partnership for a Walkable America
National Safety Council
1121 Spring Lake Drive
Itasca, IL 60143-3201
Telephone: 630-285-1121
Fax: 630-285-1315
Web site: www.nsc.org/walkable.htm

The Partnership for a Walkable America is an alliance of public organizations, private organizations, and individuals who are committed to promoting the changes needed to make it easier and safer for Americans to walk. The Partnership for a Walkable America developed a walkability checklist, and they sponsor the National Walk Our Children to School Day. They can provide information about the event, which is always held on the Wednesday of the first full week in October.

Pedestrians Educating Drivers on Safety (PEDS) — Atlanta
1447 Peachtree Street, Suite 801
Atlanta, GA 30309
Telephone: 404-873-5667
Web site: www.peds.org

PEDS provides workshops, presentations, and technical advice to transportation professionals, neighborhoods, businesses, and local governments to increase awareness of pedestrian safety issues in Atlanta.

National Center for Bicycling and Walking
1506 21st Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Fax: 202-463-6625
Web site: www.bikefed.org

The National Center for Bicycling and Walking's Internet Resource Center is an electronic information center for bicycle and pedestrian advocates, practitioners, public officials, and interested citizens.

WalkBoston
156 Milk Street
Boston, MA 02109
Telephone: 617-451-1570
Fax: 617-451-6475
Web site: www.walkboston.org

WalkBoston is a nonprofit advocacy group that promotes walking for transportation and recreation. Its mission is to create and preserve walkable, livable communities through education and advocacy. Write to or call WalkBoston to receive a copy of *Improving Pedestrian Access to Transit: An Advocacy Handbook* for $6.

RESOURCES TO PROMOTE THE DESIGN OF HEALTHY, WALKABLE COMMUNITIES

Coalition for Healthier Communities and Cities
2119 Mapleton Avenue
Boulder, CO 80304
Telephone: 303-444-3366
Fax: 303-444-1001
Web site: www.healthycommunities.org

The Coalition for Healthier Communities and Cities is designed to engage citizens and organizations nationwide in dialogues leading to action on what works for building healthier communities.

The Center for Livable Communities
Local Government Commission
1414 K Street, Suite 250
Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone: 916-448-1198
Fax: 916-448-8246
Center Hotline: 800-290-8202
Web site: www.lgc.org

The Center for Livable Communities helps local governments and community leaders be proactive in their land use and transportation planning and adopt programs and policies that lead to more livable and resource-efficient land use patterns.

Center for Neighborhood Technology
2125 West North Avenue
Chicago, IL 60647
Telephone: 773-278-4800
Web site: www.cnt.org

The Center for Neighborhood Technology promotes public policies, new resources, and accountable authority that support sustainable, just, and vital urban communities.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
1100 17th Street, NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-331-9696
Fax: 202-331-9680
Web site: www.railstrails.org

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is a group focused on enriching America's communities and countryside by creating a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors. Visit their Web site, call, or write to obtain fact sheets and find out ways that you can make a difference.

Surface Transportation Policy Project
1100 17th Street, NW, 10th floor
Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 202-466-2636
Fax: 202-466-2247
Web site: www.transact.org
Web site: www.tea2l.org

The Surface Transportation Policy Project is a national coalition of grassroots and national organizations that advocates balanced transportation policy. The Transportation and Quality of Life Campaign seeks to educate the public and decision makers about how transportation choices affect our quality of life.

Urban Land Institute (ULI)
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW, Suite 500, West
Washington, DC 20007-5201
Telephone: 202-624-7000
Fax: 202-624-7140
Web site: www.uli.org

ULI encourages the exchange of ideas and experience among its 14,000 members in 52 countries, initiates research on emerging land use trends, and provides advisory services, educational programs, and publications on policy and practice.

Walkable Communities, Inc.
320 South Main Street
High Springs, FL 32643
Telephone: 904-454-3304
Fax: 904-454-3306
Web site: www.walkable.org

Walkable Communities, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation that assists communities to become more walkable and pedestrian friendly. They offer resources such as presentations, publications, slide sets, walkable audits (to help determine specific problems and solutions), training courses, workshops, planning and visioning charrettes to facilitate community planning efforts, and meditation in community disputes over planning issues.

OTHER RESOURCES

American Automobile Association (AAA) Foundation for Traffic Safety
1440 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 201
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202-638-5944
Fax: 202-638-5943
Web site: www.aaafts.org

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety provides information on research, traffic safety resources, and informational newsletters.

American Cancer Society
1599 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, GA 30329
Telephone: 800-ACS-2345
Web site: www.cancer.org

The American Cancer Society promotes and offers free resources on the importance of a healthy diet and exercise program to improve health and reduce cancer risks.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Web site: www.fhwa.dot.gov

The FHWA provides proactive leadership, expertise, resources, and information to continually improve the quality of our nation's highway system and its intermodel connections. FHWA undertakes this mission in cooperation with partners to enhance the country's economic vitality, quality of life, and the environment.

National Civic League (NCL)
1445 Market Street, #300
Denver, CO 80202-1728
Telephone: 303-571-4343
Fax: 303-571-4404
Web site: www.ncl.org/ncl/index.htm

NCL works directly with communities to foster cross-sector collaboration and grassroots problem solving. NCL offers speeches and presentations on the healthy communities movement and training in healthy communities principles, skills, and tools; facilitates long-term healthy communities initiatives; and serves as a liaison to a national network of healthy communities innovators at the local, state, and national levels.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT PROMOTE WALK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

City of Chicago Walking School Bus Program
City of Chicago Department of Transportation
30 North LaSalle Street, #400
Chicago, IL 60602
Telephone: 312-742-2755
Fax: 312-744-8511

The City of Chicago Walking School Bus Program is designed to reclaim neighborhood streets as safe and livable places for children. Parents and caregivers are organized into groups to escort children to and from school. The program involves 450,000 public school students at 600 schools and is implemented through Chicago's Alternative Policing Strategy Program (CAPS).

Go for Green
30 Stewart Street
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5
Canada
Telephone: 613-562-5336
Fax: 613-562-5314
Web site: www.goforgreen.ca

Go for Green is the Active Living & Environment Program, whose mission is to encourage outdoor physical activity that protects, enhances, or restores the environment. Go for Green involves community-driven solutions that make a positive contribution to Canadian society. This Web site, which is available in English and French, describes Active & Safe Routes to School and compiles success stories, resources, publications, and case studies of the program.

Sustrans
Head Office
35 King Street, Bristol BS1 4DZ
England
Telephone: 0117-926-8893
Fax: 0117-929-4173
Web site: www.sustrans.org.uk/

Sustrans' goal is to encourage people to walk and cycle more in order to reduce motor traffic and its adverse effects. One project that is promoted is Safe Routes to Schools, which is designed to enable and encourage children to cycle and walk to school by improving street design, calming traffic, creating traffic-free spaces, and linking with the National Cycle Network.

United Kingdom National Walk To School Program
c/o Road Safety Section
Dorset County Council
County Hall
Dorchester, Dorset
DT1 1XJ - England
Telephone: (01305) 224680
Fax: (01305) 224771
Web site: www.walktoschool.org.uk
E-mail: walktoschool@dorset-cc.gov.uk

The UK's National Walk To School Web site is hosted by the Dorset County Council on behalf of Travelwise UK, The Pedestrians Association UK, and the Local Authority Road Safety Officers Association. These three organizations are the joint promoters of the walk to school campaign in the United Kingdom. Its main objectives are to encourage and promote accompanied walking to school on a regular basis, as a viable, safe, healthy alternative to the car. The interactive Web site contains pages of innovative ideas for teachers, parents and children as well as details of the latest Government initiatives and a comprehensive useful contact list.

WAY TO GO! School Program
3538 West 24th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6S IL4
Canada
Telephone: 604-732-1511
Fax: 604-733-0711
Web site: www.waytogo.icbc.bc.ca

WAY TO GO! is a step-by-step guide to developing and implementing a walk-to-school program in your school community. The guide includes model forms to help organize the project and communicate your plans to the school community. It also lists resources to educate your project team and school community about the environment, safety, and health reasons for reducing the use of cars.

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KIDSWALK-TO-SCHOOL TOOLS

Use the following KidsWalk-to-School Tools to help you implement your walk-to-school program. You may photocopy these tools and alter them to meet the needs of your community.

Tool A: KidsWalk-to-School Introduction Letter

Dear Neighbors,

Our neighborhood is beginning a KidsWalk-to-School Program to increase the number of children who walk to and from school. The goals of the KidsWalk-to-School program include the following:

- To get children and adults more physically active by walking to and from school.
- To make it safer for children and adults to walk in the neighborhood.
- To reduce traffic in our neighborhood and around the school.
- To prevent crime by getting more people outside keeping an eye on the neighborhood.
- To help neighbors get to know one another better.

Please join your neighbors at an informal meeting to discuss and plan ways to make this program a success.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

If you have any questions, please contact:

_____
(Name)

_____
(Telephone)

Tool B: Walk-to-School Survey

Dear Neighborhood Parents,

As you may know, members of our community are planning a KidsWalk-to-School program for _____ to encourage children to walk to school in groups under the
(school name)

supervision of responsible adults.

We need to have some information that will help tailor the program to meet the needs of each family and address any concerns you may have about the program. Please complete the attached survey, which addresses the following issues:

- The number of children you have attending this school and their ages so that we can arrange to have enough volunteers to walk with the group of children to and from school;
- How your child/children currently get to and from school;
- What concerns you have about them walking to school;
- What changes in the neighborhood would make you more likely to allow your child/children to walk to school; and
- Would you and/or your child/children be interested in participating in the program.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Sincerely,

Please return the attached survey to:

_____
(Name)

_____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

_____
(Telephone)

Walk-to-School Survey

Parent Survey (to be completed by parent or guardian)

1. **How many children do you have attending this school?** (check only one)

   ____ 1 ____ 3 ____ 5

   ____ 2 ____ 4 ____ 6

2. **What are their ages?** _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

3. **In an average school week, how many days does your child/children use the following modes of transportation to get to and from school?** (Write the number of times your child/children travel to and from school; if different for each of your children, indicate the number of times and the age of the child that travels each way.) For example, (3 (8 yr old) 2 (10 yr old) Walk home from school).

TIMES PER WEEK	TIMES PER WEEK
_____ Walk to school	_____ Walk home from school
_____ Bicycle to school	_____ Bicycle home from school
_____ Ride the school bus to school	_____ Ride the school bus home from school
_____ Ride in a car to school	_____ Ride in a car home from school
_____ Ride in a carpool to school	_____ Ride in a carpool home from school
_____ Ride the public bus or train to school	_____ Ride the public bus or train home from school
Other (explain)_____	Other (explain) _____

4. **What concerns do you have about your child/children walking to or from school?**

   (Please place the appropriate number in each box according to the following scale)

   1 = Concerns me greatly **2 = Concerns me somewhat**
   3 = Concerns me a little **4 = Not a concern**

   ____Crime (stranger danger, gangs, bullying).

   ____Traffic — too much traffic in neighborhood.

   ____Traffic — too much traffic at school.

   ____Speed — cars drive too fast through the neighborhood.

   ____No (or inadequate) sidewalks/bikeways on the route to school.

   ____Distance — school is too far away.

   ____Time — not enough time.

   ____Child/children's after-school schedule.

   ____Convenience — it is easier to drop off child/children on the way to work.

_____Child/children would be walking/bicycling alone to school.

_____Child/Children do not want to/like to walk or bicycle to school.

Other (please explain)_____

5. **If your child/children *do not* already walk or bicycle to school, what would make you more likely to allow your child/children to walk or bicycle?** (check all that apply)
If your child/children *do* already walk or bicycle to school, what changes would make you more comfortable as your child/children walk or bicycle? (check all that apply)

_____ Crime watch.

_____ Less traffic.

_____ Sidewalks/ bikeways/ crosswalks.

_____ Another child to walk/ride with your child/children.

_____ An adult to walk/ride with your child/children.

Other (please explain) _____

6. **Do you have any comments or suggestions about how this neighborhood should carry out the KidsWalk-to-School program?**

7. **Would you allow your child/children to participate in a walk-to-school program in our neighborhood?** (Circle only one)

YES NO Unsure

8. **Would you be interested in volunteering to help plan the KidsWalk-to-School program in our neighborhood?**(Circle only one)

YES NO Undecided

If yes, what days/times of the week would be convenient for you to meet to plan the KidsWalk-to-School Program? _____

9. **Would you be interested in walking with a group of children one or more times a week?**

YES NO Undecided

10. **Would you be interested in having your home identified as a "safe house"/checkpoint for emergencies that children may experience while walking to and from school?**

YES NO Undecided

Optional (please print)

Name:_____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Tool C: Walkable Routes to School Survey

Directions: Take a walk through your neighborhood and see how safe and easy it is to be a pedestrian. Place an "X" next to any items that you found to be a problem on the route to and from school and record the location of the problem after the item. Use this form to

- Identify the safest route to and from school
- Identify and prioritize problems in your neighborhood that need to be made more safe.

Route Taken: _____

1. Sidewalks	Location
☐ There are no sidewalks. (Skip to Number 2)	_____
☐ There are sidewalks, but they are not continuous.	_____
☐ Sidewalks are broken or cracked, making them unsafe or difficult to walk on.	_____
☐ Sidewalks are blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.	
☐ Sidewalks are too close to fast-moving traffic.	_____
☐ There is not enough room for two people to walk side-by-side.	_____
☐ Sidewalks do not have ramps (curb cuts) for wheelchairs, strollers, and wagons.	_____
☐ Cars or trucks are blocking the sidewalk.	_____
☐ Other. (please specify) _____	

Overall rating of sidewalks: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

2. Street Crossings	Location
☐ Road is too wide to cross safely.	_____
☐ Need traffic signals.	_____
☐ Traffic signals make pedestrians wait too long before crossing.	_____
☐ Need pedestrian crossing signals/audible signals.	_____
☐ Pedestrian crossing signals are not long enough for pedestrians to reach the other side of the street.	_____
☐ Need marked pedestrian crosswalks.	_____
☐ Parked cars on the street or utility poles are blocking the view of traffic.	_____
☐ Trees or plants are blocking the view of traffic.	_____
☐ Other. (please specify) _____	

Overall rating of sidewalks: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

3. Traffic and Driver Behavior **Location**

- ☐ Drivers do not stop at stop signs.. _____
- ☐ Drivers do not obey traffic signals. _____
- ☐ Drivers seem to be going too fast. _____
- ☐ Drivers do not yield to pedestrians. _____
- ☐ Drivers do not look before backing out of driveways. _____
- ☐ Other. (please specify) _____

Overall rating of traffic and driver behavior: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

4. Safety **Location**

- ☐ Do not feel safe because of the amount of traffic. _____
- ☐ Do not feel safe because of the behavior of drivers. _____
- ☐ Streets do not have enough lighting for walking in the dark. _____
- ☐ People are loitering along the route.
- ☐ Unleashed dogs are along the route. _____
- ☐ Vacant buildings and run-down property are along the route. _____
- ☐ Other. (please specify) _____

Overall rating of safety: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

5. Appeal **Location**

- ☐ Locations need more grass, flowers, trees, etc. _____
- ☐ There is trash on the path. _____
- ☐ Other. (please specify) _____

Overall rating of appeal: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

6. Overall Rating of School Route Walkability

Excellent: Walking to school is easy, pleasant, and safe.

Good: There are a few problems with walking to school, but children can do it safely.

Fair: Walking is difficult; safety is a concern on many of the routes to school.

Poor: The routes to school are unsafe for children to walk.

What would you like to change about the walk to school?

Tool D: Parental Consent Form

Parental Informed Consent Form for Participation in the KidsWalk-to-School Program.

Purpose and Explanation of the Program

The KidsWalk-to-School program is designed to get communities to work together to get children to school actively and safely. Children who participate in the program walk to and from school in groups led by adult volunteers.

Children in _____ will be _____ on
(Name of Neighborhood) (walking/bicycling)

_____ at _____.
(State route or name(s) of streets) (times of day in morning and afternoon)

Program Objectives

The goals of the KidsWalk-to-School program include the following:

- Increase daily physical activity for children and adults in the neighborhood.
- Increase safety for pedestrians in the neighborhood.
- Reduce traffic in and around the neighborhood and school.
- Decrease crime when more people are outside keeping an eye on their neighborhood.
- Increase community cohesion by helping neighbors get to know one another.

Potential Risks

KidsWalk-to-School is intended to reduce the risk of injury to children as they travel to and from school through the use of adult supervision. However, there are risks associated with child pedestrians. These specific risks include injury as a result of motor vehicle crashes, a fall, overexertion, or carelessness.

Voluntary Consent

I certify that I have read this consent form or it has been read to me and that I understand the program and its risks. A copy of this consent form will be given to me. By signing this consent form, I agree to allow my child to participate in this program.

Child's Name: _____

Signature of Child's Parent or Guardian: _____

Date: _____

If I have any questions about the program, I may contact

_____
(Name)

_____
(Telephone)

Tool E: Press Release

For: _____ KidsWalk-to-School Program
(Name of Neighborhood)

From: _____
(Name and telephone number of neighborhood contact)

For Release: _____
(Date to appear in press)

KidsWalk-To-School KICKOFF EVENT

Students living in _____ and attending _____ will be
(name of neighborhood) (name of school)

kicking off their KidsWalk-to-School program on _____.
(date)

_____
(list members of the community — school principal, mayor, police officers)

will walk with the children along the safe route to school they have identified. KidsWalk-to-School is a community approach to make walking to and from school a safe, active, and enjoyable part of a child's day. The program encourages children to walk in groups accompanied by adults and relies on community efforts to bring about neighborhood change that makes walking an enjoyable part of everyone's lives.

If you are interested in beginning a program in your neighborhood, contact

_____ at _____
(name) (telephone number or E-mail)

# # #

Tool F: KidsWalk-to-School Participant Evaluation

Directions: Complete the following form as it relates to the KidsWalk-to-School Program in your neighborhood.

Are you a KidsWalk-to-School Volunteer? (circle)

YES NO

If yes, explain:

Information (check all that apply)

1. How did you find out about the KidsWalk-to-School program?

_____Flier/poster

_____Letter

_____Telephone call

_____Word of mouth

_____Neighborhood meeting

_____Other

Comments or suggestions:

2. How would you describe the information you have received about the KidsWalk-to-School program?

_____Useful _____Not enough

_____Not useful _____Right amount

_____Too much

Comments or suggestions:

3. How would you describe the neighborhood KidsWalk-to-School meetings?

____Organized ____Useful ____Informative

____Disorganized ____Not useful ____Not informative

Comments or suggestions:

Program (Write the number that best corresponds to your response.)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Do not know or not applicable
1	2	3	4	5

_____ 4. Adequate precautions were taken to ensure the children's safety as they walk to and from school.

_____ 5. I believe that my child/children are safe on the way to and from school.

_____ 6. I believe that my child/children have become more skilled pedestrians.

_____ 7. I am pleased with the volunteers who walk my child/children to school.

_____ 8. I think my child/children are getting more physical activity as a result of participating in KidsWalk-to-School.

_____ 9. My child/children enjoy walking to and from school with the KidsWalk-to-School group.

_____ 10. I believe that the program has helped my family get to know our neighbors better.

Questions and Comments

11. Would you like the KidsWalk-to-School program to continue next term? (circle one)

YES NO (please explain)

12. What did you like about the KidsWalk-to-School program this term?

13. What should be changed in next term's KidsWalk-to-School program?

14. How would you rate the KidsWalk-to-School program? (circle one)

Excellent Good No opinion Poor Very poor

Additional comments and suggestions:

Your name and telephone number (optional): _____

Please return this form to:

_____
(Name)

_____
(Street, City, State, Zip Code)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE